

# **CITY OF IONIA**

## **Planning Commission**

### **October 25, 2006**

### **Meeting Minutes**

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CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Lynn Lafler called the meeting of the City of Ionia Planning Commission to order at 4:25 PM.

ROLL CALL: Roll Call revealed Commissioners David Cook, Mark Jennings, Gordon Kelley, Lynn Lafler and John Milewski present. Commissioners Dan Balice, and Tom Chadwick were excused.

Staff present included City Manager Jason Eppler, Community Development Director Larry Harvey and Public Safety Officer Doug DeVries.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA The agenda for the meeting was reviewed. After review it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Jennings to approve the agenda as prepared. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES The Commission reviewed the minutes from the August 25, 2006 meeting. After review, it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Milewski to approve the minutes with the corrected spelling of John Milewski's last name. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS Public comments were postponed until the outdoor boiler issue was discussed.

OLD BUSINESS Selection of Vice-Chairman: Chairman Lafler reported that with the recent appointment of Commissioner Roetman to the City Council, the office of Vice-Chairman was vacated. It was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Jennings to select Commissioner John Milewski Vice-Chairman. MOTION CARRIED.

Outdoor Boilers: City Manager Eppler reported that at the August meeting, the Planning Commission discussed the matter of outdoor boilers and subsequently requested that the City Council place a 120 day moratorium on new boiler placement in the City. The City Council reviewed this

request at its September 5, 2006 meeting and accepted the Commission's recommendation.

He also reported that there has been a lot of activity throughout the State recently in terms of communities addressing the outdoor boiler issue. Most have been prohibiting them although a few have adopted ordinances permitting the placement of boilers subject to certain conditions being met. He stated that if the Commission determines that boilers should be permitted subject to conditions, some issues that need to be addressed in such an ordinance include the following:

- The types of outdoor boilers to permit (ie wood fired, pellet fired, grain fired).
- Permitted location for placement of the outdoor boiler.
- Smoke stack height requirements.
- Permitted means for storing fuel for the outdoor boiler (ie cord wood, pellets, corn, etc).
- Means for disposal of ash generated by the outdoor boiler.

He further stated that in terms of the adoption process, the Commission needs to report a proposed ordinance to the City Council for consideration at its December 5, 2006 meeting. This will permit Council to debate the ordinance, schedule the public hearing and then hold the public hearing and adopt the ordinance at its January 2, 2007 meeting, just prior to the expiration of the moratorium. He suggested that in order to meet this timeframe, the Commission should reschedule its November meeting from November 8<sup>th</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Lafler called for comments from Commissioners regarding outdoor boilers and the potential prohibition.

Commissioner Kelley stated that he has received calls from constituents regarding this matter. Concerns have focused on security of the boiler and storage of fuel, especially grain or corn which may attract vermin. He stated that he is opposed to permitting wood fired boilers but may consider permitting corn fire boilers.

Commissioner Cook stated that he does not have a problem with residents being able to install any type of outdoor boiler based on home heating costs.

Commissioner Jennings stated that he is concerned about the impact that boilers may have on small lots and how fuel for the boilers may be stored.

Commissioner Milewski stated that he supports a prohibition on outdoor boilers due to smoke and potential health impact, storage of fuel and appearance.

Chairman Lafler stated that he supports a prohibition on outdoor boilers for the reasons discussed. He also reported on his discussion with the Department of Environmental Quality which has taken the position that outdoor boilers should not be placed in an urban setting.

It was moved by Commissioner Milewski, seconded by Commissioner Lafler to schedule a public hearing for 4:00 PM, Thursday, November 16, 2006 in the Council Chamber of City Hall for the purpose of receiving public comments on proposed Ordinance No. 441 which, if adopted, will add language to the City's Zoning Ordinance prohibiting outdoor boilers.

Roll Call Vote:

Cook	No	Lafler	Yes
Jennings	Yes	Milewski	Yes
Kelley	Yes		

MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Lafler then reported that Mr. Ron Reisbig was present to discuss with the Commission his proposal to install an outdoor corn boiler at his rental on West Main Street. Chairman Lafler stated that Mr. Reisbig approached the City Council about this matter at the October Council Meeting but Council deferred action on the request until the Commission had an opportunity to review it and provide a recommendation. Mr. Reisbig purchased his boiler this summer but has not installed it. Mr. Reisbig believes that since he purchased it prior to the moratorium he should be able to install it.

The Commission debated the request. After discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by

Commissioner Milewski to recommend to the City Council that Ron Reisbig be given permission to install the outdoor corn boiler that he purchased this summer at his property located at 628 West Main Street subject to the following conditions:

1. Boiler and storage facility be placed on a concrete slab of a durable thickness.
2. The door to the boiler be locked when not be tended.
3. On-site fuel storage be limited to 1 ton at any given time.
4. Boiler not be used during summer months (ie to heat water for a pool or hot water for domestic use).

Roll Call Vote:

Cook	Yes	Lafler	Yes
Jennings	Yes	Milewski	Yes
Kelley	Yes		

MOTION CARRIED.

City Manager Eppler reported that the City Council will be reviewing the recommendation at its November 8, 2006 meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

Master Plan Update-SWOT Results: Chairman Lafler reviewed the results of the SWOT analysis with the Commission. He reported that the next step in the Master Plan update process is to meet with the City's planning consultant to discuss how the matters discussed at the SWOT analysis can be incorporated into the Master Plan.

It was the consensus of the Commission to schedule a special meeting for 4:00 PM, Thursday, November 2, 2006 for the purpose of updating the City's Master Plan.

Public Notification Requirements: Chairman Lafler reviewed the Memorandum from City Manager Eppler regarding the need to update the public notification requirements contained in the Zoning Chapter of the City Code to comply with recently adopted Public Act 110 of 2006 which is known as the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. A draft amendment was reviewed.

It was moved by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Jennings to schedule a public hearing for 4:00 PM, Thursday, November 16, 2006 in the Council

Chamber of City Hall for the purpose of receiving public comments on proposed Ordinance No. 442 which, if adopted, will revise the public notification requirements contained in the City's zoning ordinance. MOTION CARRIED.

Date of November Public Hearing: It was moved by Commissioner Jennings, seconded by Commissioner Cook to change the date of the November Planning Commission Meeting to 4:00 PM, Thursday November 16, 2006. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS    None.

ADJOURNMENT                    It was moved by Commissioner Milewski, seconded by Commissioner Kelley to Adjourn the Planning Commission Meeting at 5:50 PM. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Eppler  
City Manager/Recording Secretary